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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/810,766	03/26/2004	Geoffrey R. Kruse	M61.12-0629	9088
27366	7590	09/20/2006	EXAMINER	
WESTMAN CHAMPLIN (MICROSOFT CORPORATION) SUITE 1400 900 SECOND AVENUE SOUTH MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55402-3319			CAO, PHUONG THAO	
		ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER	2164

DATE MAILED: 09/20/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/810,766	KRUSE ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Phuong-Thao Cao	2164	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 26 March 2004.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1-20 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on 26 March 2004 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>6/21/04, 7/20/04 & 3/13/06</u> . | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. This action is in response to Application filed on 03/26/2004.
2. Claims 1-20 are pending.

Information Disclosure Statement

3. The Information Disclosure Statements (IDS) filed by Applicant's on 06/21/2004, 07/20/2004 and 03/13/2006 have been received and considered. Copies of the reviewed IDS(s) are enclosed with this office action.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

4. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

4. Claims 1-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter.

Regarding claim 1, this claim is for a system. However, all of the elements claimed could be reasonably interpreted in light of the disclosure by an ordinary artisan as being software alone, and thus is directed to software *per se*, which is non-statutory

In order for such a software claim to be statutory, it must be claimed in combination with an appropriate medium and/or hardware to establish a statutory category of invention and enable any functionality to be realized.

This interpretation of 35 U.S.C. § 101 is consistent with the Interim Guidelines for Examination of Patent Applications for Patent Subject Matter Eligibility, published on 26 October 2005, which can be found at

http://www.uspto.gov/web/offices/pac/dapp/ola/preognitice/guidelines101_20051026.pdf, particularly with respect to ANNEX IV Computer-Related Nonstatutory Subject Matter, beginning on page 50.

Claims 2-17 are rejected as incorporating the deficiencies of claim 1 upon which they depend.

Regarding claims 18, this claim recites the method of retrieving data from a general ledger database to satisfy a generalized request from a report object, but fails to recite a tangible result, a requirement for compliance with the provisions of 35 U.S.C. § 101 in view of the Interim Guidelines for Examination of Patent Applications for Patent Subject Matter Eligibility, published on 26 October 2005, which can be found at

http://www.uspto.gov/web/offices/pac/dapp/ola/preognitice/guidelines101_20051026.pdf, particularly with respect to ANNEX IV Computer-Related Nonstatutory Subject Matter, beginning on page 50.

For a result to be tangible, it must be more than just a thought or a computation; it must have real-world value rather than an abstract result. For a result to be tangible, result data must be stored in some physical medium (etc. memory) or displayed to users.

Claims 19 and 20 are rejected as incorporating the deficiencies of claim 18 upon which they depend.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

5. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

6. Claims 1-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Thompson et al. (US Patent No 6,668,253).

As to claim 1, Thompson et al. teach:

“A computer system” (see Abstract) comprising:

“a uniform interface configured to receive a generalized request from a report object and, based upon information included in the generalized request, access data from a general ledger

database and return the accessed data to the report object" (see [column 11, lines 30-40], [column 25, lines 22-35], [column 26, lines 40-45] and [column 31, lines 35-45] wherein requested information from a user as disclosed is equivalent to Applicant's "generalized request from a report object"; also see [column 31] wherein the disclosure of produced financial statements reads on Applicant's claim language),

"wherein at least one staging table having a standardized structure which is independent of a structure of the general ledger database, is utilized by the uniform interface to store at least a portion of the accessed data" (see [column 2, lines 35-40] and [column 3, lines 5-10] wherein financial database is equivalent to Applicant's "general ledger database", and structure of staging database and that of financial database are independent).

As to claim 2, this claim is rejected based on arguments given above for rejected claim 1 and is similarly rejected including the following:

Thompson et al. teach:

"wherein the uniform interface is further configured to access the data from the general ledger database by translating the generalized request into a specific query which, upon execution, populates the at least one staging table with the accessed data" (see [column 3, lines 1-10], [column 25, lines 20-50] and [column 31, lines 35-45] wherein requested information represents a generalized request).

As to claim 3, this claim is rejected based on arguments given above for rejected claim 2 and is similarly rejected including the following:

Thompson et al. teach:

“wherein the uniform interface is further configured to query the at least one staging table to retrieve the accessed data and to return the accessed data to the report object after execution of the specific query that populates the at least one staging table” (see [column 26, lines 40-65] and [column 27, lines 25-45] wherein each financial report is a report object).

As to claim 4, this claim is rejected based on arguments given above for rejected claim 1 and is similarly rejected including the following:

Thompson et al. teach:

“wherein the at least one staging table is an account code table” (see [column 25, lines 44-47] for Account Tables).

As to claim 5, this claim is rejected based on arguments given above for rejected claim 1 and is similarly rejected including the following:

Thompson et al. teach:

“wherein at least one staging table is an account balance staging table” (see [column 25, lines 60-65] for Financial Account Balance Table).

As to claim 6, this claim is rejected based on arguments given above for rejected claim 1 and is similarly rejected including the following:

Thompson et al. teach:

“wherein the at least one staging table is a column filter staging table” (see [column 11, lines 9-12] for a list of predefined query filters which is equivalent to Applicant’s “column filter staging table”).

As to claim 7, this claim is rejected based on arguments given above for rejected claim 1 and is similarly rejected including the following:

Thompson et al. teach:

“wherein the generalized request includes at least one natural account is translated into at least one account code, which is stored in an account balance staging table” (see Fig. 25A for account sequence which is equivalent to Applicant’s “account code”).

As to claim 8, this claim is rejected based on arguments given above for rejected claim 7 and is similarly rejected including the following:

Thompson et al. teach:

“wherein the specific query, into which the generalized request is translated by the uniform interface, comprises a single sequential query language (SQL) statement that joins the account staging table with a balance table of the general ledger database, such that balance information for an entire report column can be retrieved by execution of the single SQL statement” (see [column 31, lines 35-60]).

As to claim 9, this claim is rejected based on arguments given above for rejected claim 8 and is similarly rejected including the following:

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Thompson et al. teach:

“wherein the balance information comprises current balance amounts for each account code in the account staging table” (see [column 25, lines 60-65] wherein each of GL accounts is equivalent to Applicant’s “account code” and account balances is equivalent to Applicant’s “balance amounts”, and Fig. 25C for balance amount item).

As to claim 10, this claim is rejected based on arguments given above for rejected claim 8 and is similarly rejected including the following:

Thompson et al. teach:

“wherein the balance information comprises year-to-date balance amounts for each account code in the account staging table” (see [column 30-35 and 60-65] wherein each of GL accounts is equivalent to Applicant’s “account code” and account balances is equivalent to Applicant’s “balance amounts”, and Fig. 25C for EOY beginning balance and EOY ending balance which is equivalent to Applicant’s “year-to-date balance”).

As to claim 11, this claim is rejected based on arguments given above for rejected claim 8 and is similarly rejected including the following:

Thompson et al. teach:

“wherein the generalized request further comprises account filter criteria, and wherein a WHERE clause of the single SQL statement is configured to include the account filter criteria” (see [column 10, lines 1-15 and 40-45] and [column 26, lines 30-40 for the function of filtering information including financial information).

As to claim 12, this claim is rejected based on arguments given above for rejected claim 1 and is similarly rejected including the following:

Thompson et al. teach:

“wherein the generalized request includes at least one natural account and account filter criteria, and wherein, with the help of the uniform interface, the at least one natural account is translated into at least one account code, which is stored in an account balance staging table, and wherein account codes that match the account filter criteria are stored in a column filter staging table” (see Fig. 25A for account sequence which is equivalent to Applicant’s “account code”, and see [column 11, lines 9-15] and [column 10, lines 1-15] for filtering information and see [column 25, lines 20-60] and Fig. 25A for account number which is equivalent to Applicant’s “natural account” and account sequence which is equivalent to Applicant’s “account code”).

As to claim 13, this claim is rejected based on arguments given above for rejected claim 12 and is similarly rejected including the following:

Thompson et al. teach:

“wherein the specific query, into which the generalized request is translated by the uniform interface, comprises a single sequential query language (SQL) statement that joins the account staging table with the column filter staging table and with a balance table of the general ledger database, such that balance information for an entire report column can be retrieved by execution of the single SQL statement” (see [column 26, lines 30-45] and [column 31, lines 35-45] for ability to combine the financial information which is equivalent to Applicant’s “joins”).

As to claim 14, this claim is rejected based on arguments given above for rejected claim 13 and is similarly rejected including the following:

Thompson et al. teach:

“wherein the balance information comprises current balance amounts for each account code in the account staging table” (see [column 25, lines 30-35 and 60-65] wherein each of GL accounts is equivalent to Applicant’s “account code” and account balances is equivalent to Applicant’s “balance amounts”, and Fig. 25C for balance amount item).

As to claim 15, this claim is rejected based on arguments given above for rejected claim 13 and is similarly rejected including the following:

Thompson et al. teach:

“wherein the balance information comprises year-to-date balance amounts for each account code in the account staging table” (see [column 30-35 and 60-65] wherein each of GL accounts is equivalent to Applicant’s “account code” and account balances is equivalent to Applicant’s “balance amounts”, and Fig. 25C for EOY beginning balance and EOY ending balance which is equivalent to Applicant’s “year-to-date balance”).

As to claim 16, this claim is rejected based on arguments given above for rejected claim 1 and is similarly rejected including the following:

Thompson et al. teach:

“wherein the at least one staging table is a temporary table” (see [column 25, lines 15-17] wherein a Summary Temporary Table is a temporary staging table).

As to claim 17, this claim is rejected based on arguments given above for rejected claim 1 and is similarly rejected including the following:

Thompson et al. teach:

“wherein the at least one staging table is a permanent table” (see [column 25, lines 17-22] wherein a Summary (permanent) Table is a permanent staging table).

As to claim 18, Thompson et al. teach:

“A computer implemented method of retrieving data, from a general ledger database, to satisfy a generalized request from a report object” (see [column 25, lines 20-30] and [column 26, lines 40-45] wherein each report is equivalent to Applicant’s “report object”), comprising:

“receiving the generalized request from the report object” (see [column 31, lines 35-40] wherein request for information is equivalent to Applicant’s “generalized request”); and

“accessing, based on information included in the generalized request, data from the general ledger database and returning the accessed data to the report object” (see [column 25, lines 20-30], [column 26, lines 40-45] and [column 31, lines 35-40] wherein database of the Financial tool is equivalent to Applicant’s “general ledger database” and each Financial report is equivalent to Applicant’s “report object”),

“wherein at least one staging table, having a standardized structure which is independent of a structure of the general ledger database, is utilized to store at least a portion of the accessed

data" (see [column 2, lines 35-40] and [column 3, lines 5-10] wherein financial database is equivalent to Applicant's "general ledger database" and structure of staging database and that of financial database are independent).

As to claim 19, this claim is rejected based on arguments given above for rejected claim 18 and is similarly rejected including the following:

Thompson et al. teach:

"wherein the accessing step further comprises translating the generalized request into a specific query which, upon execution, populates the at least one staging table with the accessed data" (see [column 3, lines 1-10], [column 25, lines 20-50] and [column 31, lines 35-45] wherein requested information represents a generalized request).

As to claim 20, this claim is rejected based on arguments given above for rejected claim 18 and is similarly rejected including the following:

Thompson et al. teach:

"wherein the at least one staging table is a temporary table" (see [column 25, lines 15-17] wherein a Summary Temporary Table is a temporary staging table).

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Phuong-Thao Cao whose telephone number is (571) 272-2735. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM (Mon - Fri).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Charles Rones can be reached on (571) 272-4085. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

PTC

September 15, 2006

Julie J. Wassum
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2167